



Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2011

10:00 AM

RI Emergency Management Agency

645 New London Avenue

Cranston, Rhode Island

I. Attendance—Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts

Lt. Governor Elizabeth H. Roberts

General Kevin R. McBride

Ed Johnson

Captain Verne Gifford

Alysia Mihalakos

Dawn Lewis

Brian Pires

William Mullen

Peter Marinucci

Gregory Scungio

Richard James

Vincent Marzullo

Claudia Staniszewski

Jeff Stevens

Peter Ginaitt

Jim Ball

James Lanni

Arthur Bovis

Geof Milner

Donna Longo DiMichele

Peter Popko

Larry Grimaldi

Liz McDonald

Marian Juskuv

Susan Earley

Lt. Patrick McMahan

Robert Seltzer
Joe McCooey
Stephen Kavanagh
Vladimir Ibarra

II. Call to Order / Comments Lt. Governor Roberts

The Chair introduced Mrs. Adriana Dawson, Interim State Director of the RI Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to provide information on a recent opportunity to provide services and/or develop small business assistance to communities suffering economic hardship attributable to the impact of a major disaster in the past 2 years (2010 Floods/Hurricane Irene).

Mrs. Dawson went on to explain how the Small Business Administration (SBA) is particularly interested in collaborative efforts (community, regional, statewide, industry sector, etc.) that may serve as best practices and models of small business assistance in areas suffering from job loss and related economic distress as a result a major disaster. The grant would provide about eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) in assistance. For further information about this program Mrs. Dawson can be contacted at the RI SBDC 401.598.2706 and or via email at adriana.dawson@jwu.edu.

Lastly, the Chair discussed the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Awarded to the Town of Bristol for a sewage back flow prevention project in the amount of \$145,913.

III. Approval of minutes from October 11, 2011

The minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. RIEMA Update

General Kevin R. McBride informed members that the FEMA Region I personnel would be wrapping up their Hurricane Irene efforts by Thursday. Also, the General stated that the announcement in regards to the open position of RI Emergency Management Agency Executive Director would be released to the press soon.

Interim Director Ed Johnson relayed information about the Hurricane efforts which are ninety-seven percent completed, with preliminary figures indicating that the administrative cost was over seven million with over five million going to Rhode Island communities.

V. Domestic Preparedness Subcommittee reports

A. Interoperability Communications Committee— *Acting Executive Director Ed Johnson, Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency.*

Acting Executive Director Johnson discussed some of the plans from the workgroup including looking at other redundancies, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures and long term strategic planning.

Director Johnson discussed the Long-Term Evolution (LTE) convergence between Sprint Nextel and Clearwire to make the networks work together. The two companies have a non-binding MOU to cooperate on technical issues, when and where to set up base stations and how to hand off data sessions.

Lastly, he mentioned a focus by the National Emergency Managers Association on other funding streams as federal allocations continue to decline.

B. Hospital Preparedness Working Group— *Alysia Mihalakos, Dept. of Health /Dawn Lewis, Hospital Association of Rhode Island.*

Ms. Mihalakos stated that the work group has been in a wind down period for the two main public health emergency preparedness grants. The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) has not yet passed, so they are waiting to see if reauthorization for funding streams occurs. The two main grants are being aligned at the federal level, which will bring about changes for the next 5 years.

Ms. Lewis, discussed the regional evacuation plans for special care hospitals and populations. An MOU has been drafted and sent to CEO's of hospitals. Ms. Lewis talked briefly about Westerly Hospital filing for receivership and how it was the second hospital in RI to take this step.

Chair Roberts interjected to note that there has been a stakeholder group created to look at the Landmark situation.

Mr. Ginaitt from LifeSpan expressed his concern about burn care-expansion, helicopter access and how could we integrate resources we have in state or in bordering states.

C. Haz Mat/Decon Technical Working Group— *James Ball, Dept. of Environmental Management.*

Mr. Ball discussed the group's participation in the Tri-State after action report (AAR) that was sent to members who participated in the drill. The drill took place in Blackstone Massachusetts and the scenario included heavy winds, rains and an incident involving 20 train cars jumping the tracks and catching fire. They will be looking at mutual aid issues and improvement of response plans and procedures.

Mr. Ball informed members that Hazmat teams will follow Local Emergency Planning Committee's and that the West Warwick and the Newport teams were decertified due to difficulty maintaining training requirements. Mr. Ball continues to work with Interim Director Johnson to reach the best outcome.

Chief Seltzer interjected that cuts to Homeland Security funding have had devastating effects on communities as moneys continue to dry up and more and more communities will be seeing consolidation of resources.

- D. Behavioral Health Disaster Response Network Working Group—*Susan Earley, Behavioral Healthcare Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.*

Ms. Early discussed the work that ESF 6 (Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services) and the Special Needs Subcommittee are doing in regards to assessing school safety preparedness with help of Stephen Conard from RIEMA.

For 2012 the group is strategically rethinking, reorganizing and providing support to VOAD, 211 and First Responders around issues with individuals who cannot respond and will need help around behavioral issues.

- E. Volunteer/Citizens' Corps Council—*Vincent Marzullo, Corporation for National & Community Service.*

Mr. Marzullo discussed training efforts with RIEMA to build capacity for four established CERTs and the formation of a RI Citizens Corps Council to encourage safer communities through personal responsibility, training and volunteer service. Also, the agency offered training in Chainsaw Operations and Introduction to Disaster Volunteering. The next training will involve an All Hazards approach to take place on January 12 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Serve Rhode Island is in the process of scheduling and delivering training in disaster volunteering to 133 AmeriCorps State members. The training is about one hour and thirty minutes in length and will provide an overview of the disaster management cycle, roles of disaster volunteers and personal preparedness.

Lastly, the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) team will work on preparedness projects with agencies including the RI Department of Health and the American Red Cross in outreach and inventory efforts. The plan will be to build an annual project that will bring NCCC into Rhode Island to work on preparedness goals.

- F. Law Enforcement Working Group—*Lt. James Manni, Rhode Island State Police.* - No report

- G. Port Security—*Erin Lambie, United States Coast Guard.*

Captain Verne Gifford provided a brief overview of the most recent activities which include preparation for the upcoming AMSTEP/PREP 2012 exercise and the implications of a Mass Rescue Operation in light of a transportation security incident.

The Captain also discussed the update of the Incident Action Plans for each of the eight designated Area Maritime Security Committees and provided information on several activities that the USCG will be involved with including:

- The Airshow June 16-17
- The America's Cup World Series on June 23-July 1 and
- Tall Ships scheduled for July 5-9th

H. Special Populations Working Group—*Steven Florio Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing /Jeffrey Stevens, Dept. of Health.*

Mr. Stevens informed members that the subcommittee met the day before with an emphasis on outreach efforts by the newly hired coordinators to the Senior High-risers. The group is trying to create a template for nursing homes and assisted living facilities and will reach out to home health agencies when grant funding becomes available.

Mr. Stevens discussed the progress with the MOU signed with 911 for the top three disabilities to be shared with dispatchers. Also, he informed members that the Special Needs Registry currently has 10,702 clients and is in the process of a second-generation web tool for police officers and fire chiefs.

Lastly, he discussed the collaborative efforts with the American Red Cross in increasing shelter awareness of special populations in terms of sheltering.

I. Urban Search and Rescue—*Chief Robert Seltzer, Central Coventry Fire Department.*

Mr. Seltzer discussed his subcommittee's mandatory November 30th training meeting that was really well attended with sixty six members participating out of ninety-nine. For 2012 the group will concentrate on Regional Response and Mutual Aid which will alleviate some of the issues with equipment and will enhance pre-deployment activities.

Mr. Seltzer, envisions regionalizing and realigning resources so that communities share expertise and expenses he discussed further the cuts in federal and state funding.

J. Transportation Security Working Group—*Brian Pires, Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council/Transportation Security Working Group.*

Mr. Pires introduced William Mullen who is the Assistant Federal Security Director and Law Enforcement Office of Law Enforcement FAMS.

Mr. Mullen described how the Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) teams have been patrolling rail stations subways, ferry terminals and other mass transit locations around the country including the Block Island Ferry. Mr. Mullen stated that the collaboration with RIPTA at Kennedy Plaza has increased the security posture tremendously.

Mr. Pires discussed some of the activities of the ATAC team including wrapping up a contraband cigarette investigation in thirty-two stores of counterfeit RI cigarette stamps and sales of cigarettes from southern states with lower cigarette taxes to a loss of Rhode Island state revenue of 8.2 million in taxes.

K. Mass Casualty —Lt. Patrick McMahon, Charlestown Police Department.

Mr. McMahon discussed the updating of the State's Mass Casualty plan and their continued work with the Rhode Island Department of Health to improve it. Mr. McMahon discussed the MOU's to trailers in the state and the grant for \$3,100 per trailer sent to each community.

New Business

Mr. Robert Leach from the Architects and Engineers Emergency Response Task Force Seven met with the State Building Commissioner John Leyden to look at a new MOU in regards to preparedness guides for snow removal. Most of these efforts are part of the lessons learned from the Massachusetts Tornadoes in Springfield and Monson.

Ms. Mihalakos discussed preliminary work to develop an emergency committee along with Maryann Medeiros from OSHA RI. The committee would look at safety concerns and how to best address them from within the ICS structure.

Next meeting will take place on **January 10 at the RI Emergency Management Agency.**